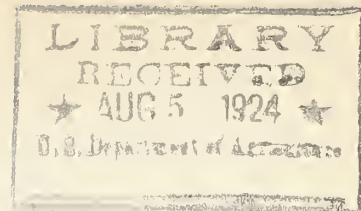


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THE EXTENSION HORTICULTURIST

August 1, 1924.

Ability to meet emergency calls in horticultural extension work without seriously disarranging or departing from the adopted plan or program is one of the problems confronting every state and federal worker today. These calls have been especially numerous of late and the real problem is to sandwich them in without disarranging the regular schedule of work.

"Grasping at straws" never saved a drowning man but many of the growers of fruits and vegetables are at present inclined to turn their attention to crops with which they are not familiar. Steady going should be the advice given these growers with the suggestion that they improve the quality of their product, grade and pack it in attractive packages and start some honest-to-goodness cooperation with their fellow growers.

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Office of Horticultural Investigations
and Extension Service Cooperating,
U. S. Department of Agriculture,
Washington, D. C.

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BE SURE YOU ARE RIGHT THEN GO AHEAD.

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Along with the proposition of adopting five and ten year programs of horticultural extension work there is occasion for a lot of hard thinking and careful investigation to determine just what are the most important local and general problems confronting the fruit and vegetable growers. A brief survey of the situation in the Tidewater section of Virginia and Eastern Maryland shows that soil fertility, source of dependable seed supply and marketing are the three big and outstanding problems. Labor conditions, high taxes, interest rates, weather conditions and losses from insects and diseases are contributory but in most instances of secondary importance.

With the diminishing supply of animal manures the maintaining of soil fertility heads the list of problems confronting the growers. This problem involves the whole range of soil management including crop rotation, drainage, the use of manures, growing soil building crops, liming and the application of fertilizers. The water relations of the soil to the requirements of fruit and vegetable crops are not fully understood and only slightly under the control of the grower. Cultural practices are frequently defective and wasteful of energy. In some cases the problem involves cutting down the acreage and increasing acre-yields on a reduced area. The advisability of reducing the acreage under cultivation in certain cases is justified by the success of those who are working a small acreage intensively and producing a high quality product that not only finds a ready sale but commands a price which returns a good margin of profit.

A good illustration of the above was found recently in the Norfolk, Va. section where a cucumber grower handling six acres under sash was receiving \$2.25 a 28-quart hamper of fancy cucumbers while at the same time a neighbor who grows cucumbers on a large scale by the usual field methods was receiving \$2.25 a barrel for his crop and not finding a ready sale at that. The man with six acres was succeeding while his neighbor was failing and the difference was in the quality of the product, and proper grading and packing in neat, attractive packages.

The second big problem as disclosed by the survey, is the securing of dependable sources of seeds and planting stock, especially vegetable seeds. The losses to vegetable growers from the planting of seeds of poor and mixed strain this season have been greater than usual. Doubtless the cold, backward season in the Eastern States has added to the difficulty but the quality of the seeds has been an important factor. Just how far horticultural extension workers can be of service in the matter of locating and securing dependable vegetable seeds is a question but the present seed situation is one of the important limiting factors in vegetable production today.

The third big problem, that of marketing, is ever present and demanding attention but its solution is based first of all upon quality production. Cases are extremely rare where under normal conditions a well grown, properly graded and attractively packed product of the orchard or vegetable garden has not been its best marketing agent. The writer has seen fancy outdoor grown tomatoes selling in the New England markets at \$4.00 a bushel in competition with inferior or ordinary South Jersey and Baltimore tomatoes at \$1.25 a bushel. The land on which the fancy tomatoes were grown in Northern Massachusetts was bringing its owner a gross return of over \$4,000 an acre and his market came to the door of his packing shed.

Quality production, proper grading and packing and cooperative selling will go a long way toward the solution of the marketing problem but it is going to be a big job to get all of the factors in the case pulling together. At every turn we are confronted with the need for more investigational work and definite results upon which to base our extension recommendations. There is need for and we must have closer working relations between investigators and extension workers in order to get the most out of the effort being put into the work. The spirit of cooperation and helpfulness on the part of growers is truly remarkable and makes possible the carrying on of work in an effective manner. There is however, a great amount of educational work to be done among growers, in fact it is doubtful if the job ever will be completed.

VACATION DAYS.

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Every extension worker who is worth his or her "salt" needs a vacation about once a year to break the routine and add a little pep to their system. It matters little where they go or what they do during the vacation period so long as there is a complete change of scene and regular work left behind. The vacation period, however, should be restful and not so strenuous as to leave the vacator all frazzled out physically and mentally at the end of the vacation period. Easy motor trips to nearby points of interest especially if the trip include mountains, lakes or seaside are usually restful. Where or how one spends a vacation is not half as important as is the frame of mind in which the recreation is undertaken. Some of the most pleasant experiences of life are often realized under circumstances that in the beginning offer little that is attractive.

Miss Rose Glaspey, who usually writes the stencil for the Extension Horticulturist, is spending her vacation at her home in Iowa. One of the authors is responsible for the work on this number which accounts for errors in spelling, punctuation, etc. On August 8th Prof. Glose expects to leave for a visit to the extension workers in Washington, Oregon and Idaho, stopping for week of leave or vacation in Yellowstone National Park. On August 23rd Mr. Beattie plans to vacate the office for about ten days and motor to his old home in Eastern Ohio.



STANDARD FRUIT VARIETIES.

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When we asked for lists of standard fruit varieties in the July Extension Horticulturist we anticipated a response from at least a majority of the States. Since only nine States, Alabama, Georgia, Kentucky, Nebraska, New Jersey, North Carolina, Pennsylvania and West Virginia, have responded we will hold the matter open until later trusting that all of the States will respond. Since we now expect to include these standard commercial fruit lists in the County Agent Handbook which is at present being prepared by the Department of Agriculture we would appreciate an early reply from all extension horticulturists except those in the States listed above. These reports will also be listed in a later number of the Extension Horticulturist.

AMERICAN SOCIETY FOR HORTICULTURAL SCIENCE.

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It is now time for all Extension Horticulturists to decide upon the preparation of addresses to be presented at the annual meeting of the American Society for Horticultural Science which will be held in Washington, D. C., during the last three days of December. We desire to make the extension phase of the program especially strong this year especially as regards plans of work and methods of carrying them out.

VEGETABLE GROWERS ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA.

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Louisville, Kentucky has been selected as the meeting place of the Vegetable Growers Association of America, September 16-20, 1924. Louisville is one of the most interesting truck growing centers of the country and the outside features of the annual convention promise to be especially attractive this year. The "Celery King" contest put on by the Market Growers Journal, is becoming a very prominent feature of the exhibits. The exhibits of labor saving machinery for use on truck gardens is always good and promises to be especially complete this year. F. C. Gaylord, Secretary Indiana Vegetable Growers Association, says "We are planning on having about half a thousand at the National Convention at Louisville in September." Why not attend the Convention at Louisville as a vacation trip?

OFFICE VISITORS.

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Mr. F. A. Motz was a caller at this office on July 16th and reported horticultural extension work moving along nicely in Virginia. One interesting new line of work is the organization of Inspection Rings in fruit grading, packing and marketing. The plan is to have the growers of each ring sign up at least 10,000 barrels of apples to be properly graded and packed, then inspected by a State inspector before

shipment. The organization work and the training of fruit growers in grading and packing are done by the extension horticulturists and the inspection work by the State Division of Markets which also trains the inspectors. In some cases car lots are inspected and certificates issued by Federal inspectors. At present 500,000 barrels of apples have been signed up in eleven counties for this year's inspection ring work. Steps have been taken to market most, if not all, of these apples in southern markets.

Just as the above paragraph was being written who should walk in but R. M., "Bob" Adams, formerly of this office but for some time past of Ithaca, N. Y. Mr. Adams is supervising the Junior gardening work and home garden extension work and incidentally writing most of the rural poetry for New York. We are always glad to have "Bob" around for he has such a pleasing way of making himself perfectly at home.

SPRAYING ON THE INCREASE IN MISSOURI.

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The following paragraph appears in a recent letter from Mr. A. P. Boles of Missouri:

"The amount of spraying material which has been used in Missouri this year will far exceed that of any previous year. This indicates results which the College of Agriculture is getting thru its Extension Service in stimulating interest in spraying by issuing timely circulars to the farmers for each spray. The interest of the fruit growers of the State is indicated by the fact that we have received more than 8,000 requests for information on spraying and orchard management."

HORTICULTURAL EXTENSION LITERATURE

Received during July, 1924.

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Canning Fruits and Vegetables. Bul. 284, July, 1924.

Michigan Agricultural College - East Lansing, Mich.

Bean Club Work. Club Bul. No. 3 (Revised), June 1924.

Minnesota University - University Farm, St. Paul, Minn.

Potato Growing. Special Bulletin No. 85, May 1924.

New York College of Agriculture - Ithaca, N. Y.

Grading, Packing and Handling Head Lettuce in N.Y. State Extension Bulletin No. 87, June 1924.

Ohio State University - Columbus, Ohio.

About Perennials. Ext. Service Bul. Vol. XIX, No. 6, 1923-24.

West Virginia University - Morgantown, W. Va.

West Virginia Demonstration Apple Packing School. Cir. 275, July, 1924.

